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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE , CALIFORNIA **July 2016**

President's Message

This month was a very busy one for the members of the VacaValley Radio Club members. It was even more so for the President, Marcus-KI6WDX.

Unfortunately major work commitments interfered with his ability to be fully involved with the month's efforts. Long hours and a grueling commute to his job took its toll on him.

Vice President Frank Garay-KJ6RWQ assumed control of the meetings, efficiently planning and scheduling the club activities.

Prospective new members visited a few of the club meetings and some decided to sign up.

Several members visited the Nut Tree Jimmy Doolittle Air Museum. They were quite interested in the displays, especially the biplane built from scratch by the Rodriguez brothers in 1917 when they were about 17 years old. The museum has Snoopy the dog in the pilot's cockpit.

The coming months will also be busy with a new election of officers, the Farmers Market display, planning for the 2017 Field Day, arranging for presentations at club meetings and whatever pops up. Of course, most of this won't be happening until the club reconvenes meetings on September 12.

For the new members, the club normally takes a Spring break during July and August.

The newsletter will still be issued during the July and August as usual.

Until then...73

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Meeting minutes

I will keep it simple for this month:

Good day VVRC & Ham operators worldwide,

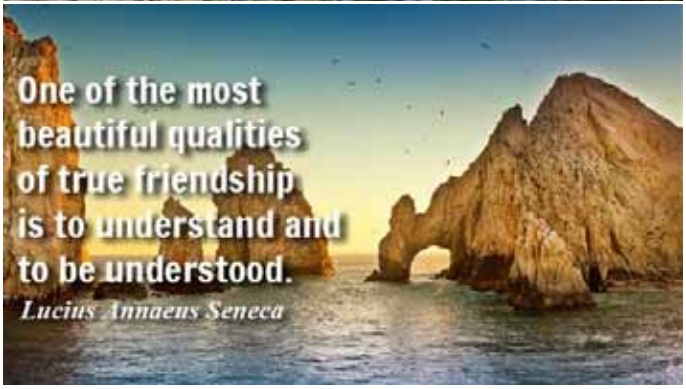
June Eating Meeting had very great turn out. Thank you to those who attended. Missed those who were not able to make it.

Field day at Nut Tree was a hoot. Plenty of new faces and faces not seen in a while. No negativity seen except for the - on a battery post. Team work and can do attitude was a plenty. It was awesome HAM Radio times with fellow HAM Radio folk.

Next event official event is VVRC at the Vacaville farmers market August 6th

Summer break is in effect and informal meets and ham radio stuff still encouraged. Grow the hobby and have fun

7 3
KK6BXP



The Annual Spring Break Party

Our Annual Spring Break Party was held at Murrillo's Mexican Restaurant on East Monte Vista Street. 20 members made reservations and 22 showed up. The party was right in the middle of regular customers, was noisy and difficult to talk to each other, but the food was good. Hopefully parties will be in a smaller room in the future. But what the heck, everyone enjoyed themselves anyway. I'll let the photos speak for themselves.

W6VVRC Field Day

By Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC& Bruce N6THN (photos)

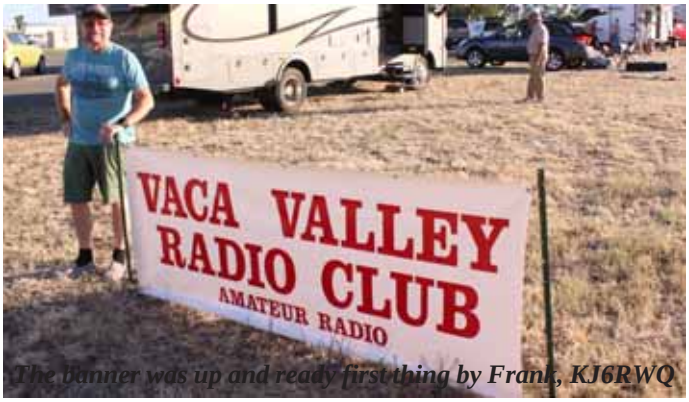
After several weeks of planning for the 2016 ARRL Field Day start day arrived with much anticipation by all that were involved.

Bruce, N6THN arrived with his trailer a before 7am.

The first to arrive at the Nut Tree Airport site was Bruce, N6THN.

He immediately began to unload equipment and antennas and began setting up his station. There were plenty of antennas and included a sound system so visitors could listen in on the contacts.

Next in line was Frank, KJ6RWQ who immediately set up the club banner as his first priority.



The banner was up and ready first thing by Frank, KJ6RWQ

Frank and his wife, Beth, came in style

Right behind Frank was Art KI6UXE in his motor home ready to get started.

The area began to be filled by more loaded vehicle shortly

More of the teams began to fill the allotted parking area in short order and and soon several varieties of

Brian, KK6BXP had a major load in his little car

antennas were spilling from the vehicles that included all the legal Field Day bands from 160 to ten meters.

As everyone was pitching in to unload and erect the many antennas a brief air show was put on over the field by the nearby Nut Tree Airport Jimmy Doolittle Air museum. The museum is directly across the street from our locatiion and includes many interesting planes.

It was amazing to see how much equipment Brian, KK6BXP, managed to pack into his SUV. Equipment included a tower, beam antenna computer, ham radios, an impressive battery box that included a 2,000-watt sine wave inverter, and other "stuff".

Next page---------->

(3)

A short and unexpected show flew over the area complements of the Nut TreeAirport Jimmy Doolittle Museum

The all-important kitchen was set up as well by Art, WD6BQX and Art, KI6UXE. From Chef Art, WD6BQX, came a continuous flow of great hamburgers and hot dogs as well as breakfast the following morning.

As the antennas went up, so did the heat, but that didn't stop anyone from continuing to get the job done with great teamwork by all.

Art, KI6UXE and Art, WD6BQX relax in front of the "Kitchen."

The very dry clay was as solid as concrete in several areas and required a fence post hammer to get the guy wire stakes driven into the ground.

Later in the morning the Doolittle Museum put on a pancake breakfast that was partaken with gusto by several members of the club.

Several interesting aircraft were on display just outside the hanger next to the breakfast area.

With full bellies, equipment set up and antennas in place, it was time to start operating. The sun was merciless but with several water misting units, fans and popup shelters in place the contacts began ringing up.

The Doolittle Museum Pancake breakfast was excellent

Bruce, N6THN, was the first to haul in contacts, as others got on line. No one planned to set any records but just wanted to enjoy the day as members shared time on the many rigs.

A couple of samples of the many aircraft available

And one more

During the day some of the members took a break and visited the Nut Tree Jimmy Doolittle Air Museum. Several new friendships were made. Apparently the club may be invited occasionally to set up demonstrations during special events at the museum; at least that is the rumor.

Later in the day ARRL representative Jim Latham-AF6AQ stopped by doing his checking of the area Field Day operations. Several members enjoyed a conversation

Bob-KK6BXZ, and Bruce-N6THN worked the bands together

Frank-KJ6RWQ appers to be happy with his scores

with Bob. He definitely had a lot of territory to cover during his inspections

After a long hot day everyone slowly settled down and relaxed. The heat began to lose its edge and the sun edged its way over the horizon.

The heat began taking its toll on Brian-KK6BXP

Jerry-KJ6SCC just faking to be an operator while taking notes for the newsletter

Bob, KM6BXZ, and ARRL representative Jim Latham-AF6AQ check out the band conditions

Bruce took some photographs of the evening sunset as the sun made its way over the horizon.

The next day a couple hours of working the bands came to the end of the Field Day for the club.

A short roundtable of members gathered to discuss things that went right or wrong was assembled. Other items discussed included how to plan the next Field Day, the

Continued on Page 6------->

A fine sunset photo taken by Bruce made a pleasant day's ending

August Farmers Market setup, and possibly even a trip with rigs to go to the gold country and pan some gold at one of the United Prospectors Inc. site. I just happen to be a life member of the United Prospectors and may be able to get permission to use one of the claims by non-members..

It was decided to start teardown of equipment before the heat returned. The antennas came down easily with some urging with a crowbar and chain to pull out stubborn stakes.

Everyone felt the club really worked together to make the Field Day an outstanding successs.

A quick total of contacts made added up to about 500. Not a record setter but the teamwork by all the participants and sharing of knowledge was definitely a a plus for the club. You can bet that next year will be even greater.

Left to right-Back Row-Brian, KK6BXP; Kim, KI6JNX; Jerry, KJ6SCC; Frank, KK6YCS; Bruce, N6THN; Roger, KK6OPW; Art, WD6BQX
Left to Right-Front Row-Kevin, W6VLF; Bob, KK6BXZ; Art, KI6UXE & wife, Beth; Frank, KJ6RWQ

THE BIT BUCKET

OPERATING TIP

Getting S potted by the Reverse Beacon Network

If you want to have big scores, you know it's "all about that rate," and you're going to have to run a frequency. It's important that you maintain a consistent stream of "assisted" callers to feed your rate, and one of the ways to do that is to maximize your potential to be spotted.

One way to get spotted is to be heard by the Reverse Beacon Network (RBN). The RBN works by scanning the bands looking for stations transmitting "CQ-like" messages.

To get spotted, it's key to have your CQ message be on that the RBN network will recognize. A message like "CQ TEST N9ADG" is one format that can work, with two caveats: All parts of the message should be sent at a consistent speed, with proper spacing between elements, and the message should be sent twice, although a recent test showed that I was able to get spotted by sending my call just once.

If your favorite CQ message isn't one that is compatible with RBN, you might want to have an additional RBN-friendly message that you send periodically. To see stations spotting you in real time, try the URL http://www.reversebeacon.net/dxsd1/dxsd1.php?f=0&c=YOURCALL&t=dx

2016 Officers

President: Marcus MacLean-KI6WDX
VP: Frank Garay-KJ6RWQ
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt-K6HEW
Secretary: Brian Hagen-KK6BXP

Board of Directors:
Brian Hagen-KK6BXP
Ruff Gunn-K6DME
Antonio Del Rio-N6ZGB
Richard Craig-KJ6MIB
Artthur Miller-KI6UXE

APPOINTED POSITIONS
VVRC Net Control Chairperson
Club Activities Chairperson-Frank Garay-KJ6RWQ
Newsletter Editor-Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor-Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Museum Foundation Closing; Donates Assets to NCDXF Don Wallace

The Don Wallace Museum Foundation (DWMF) is shutting down, as the famous W6AM Rhombic Ranch in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, has been subsumed by residential development. The DWMF has donated $29,000 to the Northern California DX Foundation (NCDXF).

"The donation comes with *no* restrictions or caveats," DWMF Board Chair Joe Locascio, K5KT, said. "As I strongly suspect, Don (the original) W6AM would favor such a donation to an organization dedicated to DXing!"

Locascio said the foundation is in the final phase of closing down after nearly 30 years of existence. "The W6AM Radio Club will continue as long as needed to support the W6AM call sign," he noted. Locascio said the Board was making the donation to NCDXF "on behalf of previous donors," who had hoped to see some radio activity at the old W6AM Rhombic Ranch.

"Unfortunately, we were not able to achieve our long term goal of an actual museum with an active radio station on the property," Locascio said. He pointed out that a 18 × 24 bronze plaque on a large rock, unveiled in March 2015 and dedicated to the memory of Don Wallace, W6AM, remains at the entry to the Wallace Ranch (see Sept 2015 *QST*, p 20), where more than 80 homes are located on the approximately 24 acres of property that W6AM owned when he died in 1985.

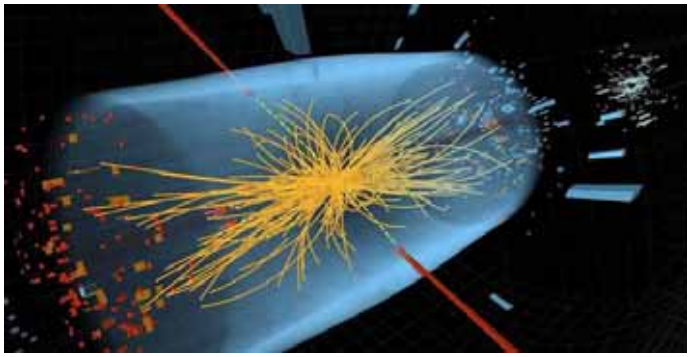
"This large grant to NCDXF is our way of letting the donors to the museum know the funds were passed to a charitable foundation whose goals are consistent with the museum goals," Locascio said.

Former notable members of the DWMF include the late US Sen Barry M Goldwater, K7UGA, who was Honorary Chairman.

"The NCDXF Board of Directors has assured the DWMF that the donated funds will be carefully used to support DXpeditions to the most wanted entities, which tend to be the most expensive," NCDXF Vice President Glenn Johnson, W0GJ, said in a May 31 NCDXF news release.

The Government's Do-Nothing Approach to EMP Threats

Heather N. Madden



Imagine you're driving down the interstate, and suddenly, your car comes to a halt. You pick up your cell phone to call a family member for help, but you don't have service. Then, when you look up, you see that all vehicles are also stopped. It's 96 degrees out so you decide to walk to the nearest gas station to grab a bottled water only to find that your debit card has been rendered useless. Believe it or not, this scenario is a very real possibility. EMPs—pulses of electromagnetic energy created by natural or manmade causes, such as a terrorist attack—have the potential to critically damage our electrical grid and catastrophically disrupt communications, transportation, emergency services, and food and water supplies, virtually destroying the world we live in today.

Even worse, lives are at stake. According to Dr. Peter Pry, the executive director of the Task Force on National and Homeland Security, EMPs pose "existential threats that could kill 9 of 10 Americans through starvation, disease, and societal collapse."

Most presume that such an event must be extremely unlikely—a one-in-a-billion possibility—so we realistically don't need to worry about it. Yet analyses show that EMP is not an idle threat. Solar activity is cyclical and peaks every 11 years, and historical auroral records show that extreme storms like a Carrington-level event— which could create a power outage for 20 million to 40 million people in the United States for anywhere from 16 days to one to two years—occur roughly every 150 years, suggesting it is almost inevitable that a solar flare event will happen at some point in the future. In fact, there is a 12 percent likelihood of a solar storm powerful enough to impact our lives happening in the next decade.

We also know that a nuclear EMP attack is within the realm of possibility. According to a report from the EMP Commission—a special commission created by Congress to study EMP and to identify ways to mitigate the risk—China and Russia have considered "limited nuclear attack options that, unlike their Cold War plans, employ EMP as the primary or sole means of attack."

Surely there is no remedy to this potential danger or the federal government would take necessary precautions to protect us against this threat. After all, isn't that precisely why government exists in the first place, to keep us safe?

The good news is that protective equipment for the civilian grid is available and can be installed in a timely manner. The bad news is that the departments of Homeland Security and Energy have done little so far to protect us against this very real danger.

The EMP Commission also offered 100 steps that policymakers could take to prepare our infrastructure so we can better weather an EMP. Yet as Joe Colangelo, a former Navy officer, recounts in a recent article for the *Wall Street Journal*, little action has been taken:

"In April, the Government Accountability Office released an alarming account of the bureaucratic dysfunction obstructing EMP mitigation. The GAO determined that although divisions within Homeland Security have been assigned specific tasks, departmental leaders have failed to ensure that this work is carried out. The two departments have not even identified the elements of the electrical infrastructure that most need protecting. Nor have the agencies coordinated strategies to address risks associated with EMPs, including research and development of equipment designed to mitigate damage."

NET CONTROL OPERATORS
1st week of month-Jerry Bowen, KJ6SCC
2nd week of month-Marcus MacLean, KI6WDX
3rd week of month-Chris Jones, KD7TQO
4th week of month-Brian Hagen, KK6BXP
On months with 5 weeks-Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Agency heads have explained that they are doing another study—but it won't be ready until 2017. That means that more than nine years will have passed from the original EMP commissions report and this follow-up study….and America still won't be any safer from the potentially devastating impact of an EMP.

Certainly the complexity of EMPs contributes to this inactivity, but clearly lawmakers should do better and be focused on finding a way to cut through the bureaucratic red tape and take positive action. Given all the money spent—and often wasted—by the federal government, it's all but unforgivable that these needed investments haven't been made to protect American citizens. The public should be outraged and ask that Washington, for once, do its job and make getting prepared for this kind of catastrophe a priority.

From the Solar Storm Risk to the North American Electric Grid 2014 Federal Report

Executive Summary

A Carrington-level extreme geomagnetic storm is almost inevitable in the future. While the probability of an extreme storm occurring is relatively low at any given time, it is almost inevitable that one will occur eventually. Historical auroral records suggest a return period of 50 years for Quebec-level storms and 150 years for very extreme storms, such as the Carrington Event that occurred 154 years ago.

The risk of intense geomagneticst storms is elevated as we approach the peak of the current solar cycle. Solar activity follows an 11-year cycle, with the most intense events occurring near the cycle peak. For the current Cycle 24, the geomagnetic storm risk is projected to peak in early 2015.

As the North American electric infrastructure ages and we become more and more dependent on electricity, the risk of a catastrophic outage increases with each peak of the solar cycle.

Our society is becoming increasingly dependent on electricity. Because of the potential for long-term, widespread power outage, the hazard posed by geomagnetic storms is one of the most significant.

Weighted by population, the highest risk of storm-induced power outages in the US is along the Atlantic corridor between Washington D.C. a n d New York City. This takes into account risk factors such as magnetic latitude, distance to the coast, ground conductivity and transmission grid properties. Other high-risk regions are the Midwest states, such as Michigan and Wisconsin, and regions along the Gulf Coast.

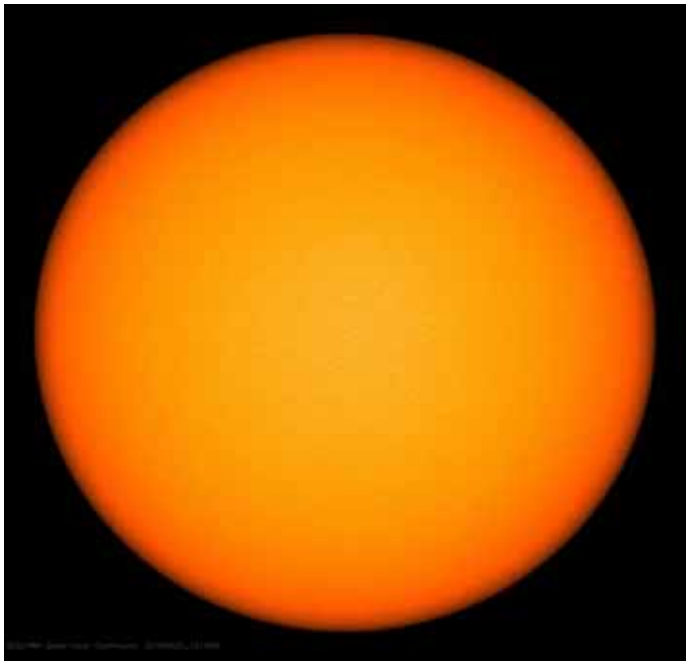
The total U.S. population at risk of extended power outage from a Carrington-1evel storm is between 20-40 million, with durations of 16 days to 1-2years. The duration of outages will depend largely on the availability of spare replacement transformers. If new transformers need to be ordered, the lead-time is likely to be a minimum of five months. The total economic cost for such a scenario is estimated at $0.6-2.6 trillion USD (see Appendix).

Storms weaker than Carrington-level could result in a small number of damaged transformers (around 10-20), but the potential damage to densely populated regions along the Atlantic coast is significant. The total number of damaged transformers is less relevant for prolonged power outage than their concentration. The failure of a small number of transformers serving a highly populated area is enough to create a situation of prolonged outage.

A severe space weather event that causes major disruption to the electricity network in the US could have major implications for the insurance industry. If businesses, public services and households are without power for sustained periods of time, insurers may be exposed to business interruption and other claims.

‘The sun goes blank again during the weakest solar cycle in more than a century’

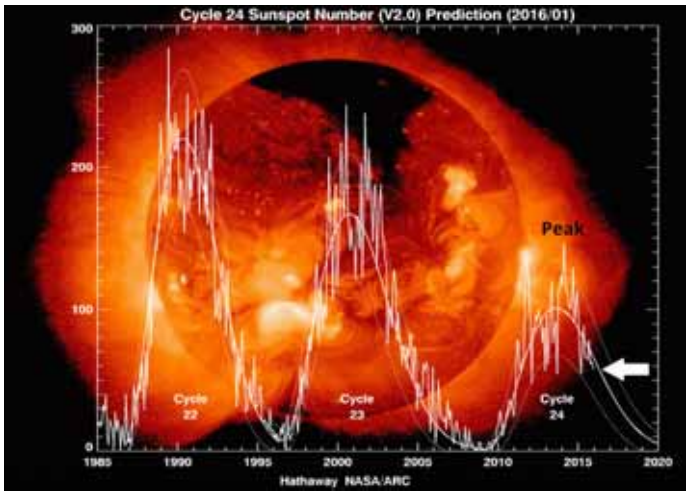
By: Marc Morano - Climate Depot-June 25, 2016



The latest solar image is completely spotless for the second time this month; image courtesy NASA

Overview

For the second time this month, the sun has gone completely blank. On June 4th, the sun went completely spotless for the first time since 2011 and that quiet spell lasted for about 4 days. Sunspot regions then reappeared for the next few weeks on a sporadic basis, but are once again completely missing from the surface of the sun. The blank sun is a sign that the next solar minimum is approaching and there will be an increasing number of spotless days over the next few years. At first, the blankness will stretch for just a few days at a time, then it’ll continue for weeks at a time, and finally it should last for months at a time when the sunspot cycle reaches its nadir. The next solar minimum phase is expected to take place around 2019 or 2020. The current solar cycle is the 24th since 1755 when extensive recording of solar sunspot activity began and is the weakest in more than a century with the fewest sunspots since cycle 14 peaked in February 1906.



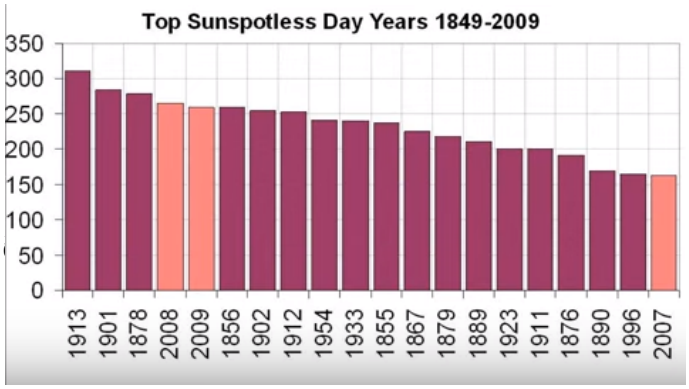
Sunspot numbers for solar cycles 22, 23 and 24 which shows a clear weakening trend; courtesy Dr. David Hathaway, NASA/MSFC

Solar cycle 24

We are currently more than seven years into Solar Cycle 24 and it appears the solar maximum of this cycle was reached in April 2014 during a spike in activity (current location indicated by arrow). Going back to 1755, there have been only a few solar cycles in the previous 23 that have had a lower number of sunspots during its maximum phase. The peak of activity in April 2014 was actually a second peak in solar cycle 24 that surpassed the level of an earlier peak which occurred in March 2012. While many solar cycles are double-peaked, this is the first one in which the second peak in sunspot number was larger than the first peak. The sunspot number plot (above) shows a clear weakening trend in solar cycles since solar cycle 22 peaked around 1990.

While a weak solar cycle does suggest strong solar storms will occur less often than during stronger and more active cycles, it does not rule them out entirely. In fact, the famous “superstorm” known as the Carrington Event of 1859 occurred during a weak solar cycle (number 10). In addition, there is some evidence that most large events such as strong solar flares and significant geomagnetic storms tend to occur in the declining phase of the solar cycle. In other words, there is still a chance for significant solar activity in the months and years ahead. The last solar minimum phase lasted from 2007 to 2009 and it was

historically weak. In fact, it produced three of the most spotless days on the sun since the middle 1800's (bar graph



Top "sunspotless" days since 1849; the last solar minimum phase produced 3 of these years

Conequences of a solar minimum

Contrary to popular belief, solar minimum is not a period of complete quiet and inactivity as it is associated with numerous interesting changes. First, cosmic rays surge into the inner solar system with relative ease during periods of solar minimum. Galactic cosmic rays coming from outside the solar system must propagate upstream against the solar wind and a thicket of solar magnetic fields. Solar wind decreases and sun's magnetic field weakens during solar minimums making it easier for cosmic rays to reach the Earth. This is a more dangerous time for astronauts as the increase in potent cosmic rays can easily shatter a strand of human DNA. Also, during years of lower sunspot number, the sun's extreme ultraviolet radiation (EUV) drops and the Earth's upper atmosphere cools and contracts. With sharply lower aerodynamic drag, satellites have less trouble staying in orbit— a good thing. On the other hand, space junk tends to accumulate, making the space around Earth a more dangerous place for astronauts.

Meteorologist Paul Dorian

Vencore, Inc.

Why the sun going blank means a 'Game of Thrones'-like winter is coming

Another look at why the global warming crowd may be all wet

You may not have noticed but our sun has gone as blank as a cue ball. As in, it's lost its spots.

According to scientists, this unsettling phenomenon is a sign we are heading for a mini ice age.

Meteorologist and renowned sun-watcher Paul Dorian raised the alarm in his latest report, which has sparked a mild panic about an impending "Game of Thrones"-style winter not seen since the 17th century.

"For the second time this month, the sun has gone completely blank," Dorian says.

"The blank sun is a sign that the next solar minimum is approaching and there will be an increasing number of spotless days over the next few years.

"At first, the blankness will stretch for just a few days at a time, then it'll continue for weeks at a time, and finally it should last for months at a time when the sunspot cycle reaches its nadir. The next solar minimum phase is expected to take place around 2019 or 2020."

According to NASA, the sun goes through a natural solar cycle approximately every 11 years. The cycle is marked by the increase and decrease of sunspots — visible as dark blemishes on the sun's surface, or photosphere. The greatest number of sunspots in any given solar cycle is designated as "solar maximum." The lowest number is "solar minimum."

"During Solar Max, huge sunspots and intense solar flares are a daily occurrence. Auroras appear in Florida. Radiation storms knock out satellites. Radio blackouts frustrate CB radio as well. The last such episode took place in the years around 2000-2001," the space agency's website explained.

"During solar minimum, the opposite occurs. Solar flares are almost non-existent while whole weeks go by without a single, tiny sunspot to break the monotony of the blank sun. This is what we are experiencing now."

Given that the sun is the main driver of all weather and climate, the sinister-sounding "blankness" to which Dorian refers has some experts predicting a "Maunder Minimum" phase similar to one which began in 1645 and which is referred to as the "Little Ice Age."

The Maunder Minimum, named after solar astronomer Edward Maunder, lasted for a brutal 70 years

Continued on page 12

and conditions were so cold, the Thames froze over.

A slightly less intense ice age-like period called the Dalton Minimum — after British meteorologist John Dalton — arrived decades later and lasted from about 1790 to 1830.

"If history is any guide, it is safe to say that weak solar activity for a prolonged period of time can have a cooling impact on global temperatures in the troposphere which is the bottommost layer of Earth's atmosphere — and where we all live," Dorian says.

Dorian's findings back research by professor Valentina Zharkova of Northumbria University, who warned that a predicted sharp decline in solar activity between 2020 and 2050 was a sign that another ice age was coming. "I am absolutely confident in our research," Zharkova said.

"It has good mathematical background and reliable data, which has been handled correctly. In fact, our results can be repeated by any researchers with the similar data available in many solar observatories, so they can derive their own evidence of upcoming Maunder Minimum in solar magnetic field and activity."

And there are other consequences of a sun without spots. Not least for astronauts who face the risk of having their DNA "shattered" by cosmic rays, whose potency surges during periods of solar weakness.

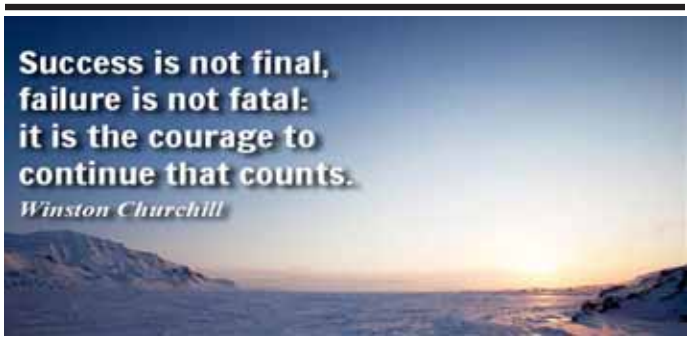
According to Dorian, cosmic rays surge into the inner solar system "with relative ease" during periods of solar minimum.

"Solar wind decreases and sun's magnetic field weakens during solar minimums, making it easier for cosmic rays to reach the Earth," he explained.

"This is a more dangerous time for astronauts as the increase in potent cosmic rays can easily shatter a strand of human DNA. Also, during years of lower sunspot number, the sun's extreme ultraviolet radiation drops and the Earth's upper atmosphere cools and contracts.

"With sharply lower aerodynamic drag, satellites have less trouble staying in orbit — a good thing. On the other hand, space junk tends to accumulate, making the space around Earth a more dangerous place for astronauts."

News.com



Pack Roving

Pack Roving is a technique that mobile or portable VHF/UHF contest stations use to take advantage of particular multiplier scoring rules in a contest. It involves multiple rover stations moving in concert and making contacts with one another while visiting new grid squares. Depending on a particular contest's rules, if four rovers each visit a different grid square, work each other, then change position to a new grid square six times, each rover could earn six multipliers plus eighteen contacts per band. Some contests also count grid square visits as a multiplier. As rovers are often equipped with multiple bands, scores can add up quickly. Roving techniques and contest rules have co-evolved through the years. The Southern California Contest Club has used this technique with great success, and N6NB's roving website provides some historical perspective.

RemoteQTH.com has a new modular antenna switch kit that could be useful in your station-building activities. By combining multiple modules, it can scale in the number of antennas or in the number of transceiver to what the application requires.

Trung, W6TN, details how a Mumble server can be set up to serve audio from a remote radio, in the context of accessing a remote Elecraft KX3 from a mobile phone. A Mumble audio server could be a component you need for your remote station.

Adding wireless network capability to some of our serial-attached contest gear is easier with inexpensive chips like the ESP8266. There's a wealth of information now available on how to utilize this chip, and one person went so far as to WiFi enable his Fluke Multimeter.

New Features in Amateur Radio Contact Log

Scott, N3FJP, announces the availability of Amateur Contact Log 5.6, as well as updates to all his contest logging programs. The list of new features and capabilities is long, and includes improvements in API functionality and the sharing of CW sending between applications. Of particular note to contesters is Scott's explanation of his change of opinion on call history databases, resulting in implementation of call history functions. You can read all about it in his announcement.

Good cheap watches

It all started with a couple of telegraph operators…..

If you were in the market for a watch in 1880,would you know where to get one? You would go to a store, right?

Well, of course you could do that, but if you wanted one that was cheaper and a bit better than most of the store watches, you went to the train station.

Sound a bit funny?

Well, for about 500 towns across the northern United States, that's where the best watches were found. Why were the best watches found at the train station? The railroad company wasn't selling the watches, not at all. The telegraph operator was.

Most of the time the telegraph operator was located in the railroad station because the telegraph lines followed the railroad tracks from town to town.

It was usually the shortest distance and the right-of-ways had already been secured for the rail line. Most of the station agents were also skilled telegraph operators and that was the primary way that they communicated with the railroad.

They would know when trains left the previous station and when they were due at their next station.And it was the telegraph operator who had the watches.As a matter of fact, they sold more of them than almost all the stores combined for a period of about 9 years.

This was all arranged by "Richard", who was a telegraph operator himself. He was on duty in the North Redwood, Minnesota train station one day when a load of watches arrived from the East. It was a huge crate of pocket watches. No one ever came to claim them.

So Richard sent a telegram to the manufacturer and asked them what they wanted to do with the watches.The manufacturer didn't want to pay the freight back, so they wired Richard to see if he could sell them. So Richard did.

He sent a wire to every agent in the system asking them if they wanted a cheap, but good, pocket watch. He sold the entire case in less than two days and at a handsome profit. That started it all'

He ordered more watches from the watch company and encouraged the telegraph operators to set up a display case in the station offering high quality watches for a cheap price to all the travelers.

It worked! It didn't take long for the word to spread and, before long, people other than travelers came to the train station to buy watches.

Richard became so busy that he had to hire a professional watch maker to help him with the orders. That was Alvah Roebuk. And the rest is history as they say.

Suffering from ill health, Roebuck later resigned, although the company still retained his name.

The business took off and soon expanded to many other lines of dry goods. Richard and Alvah left the train station and moved their company to Chicago.

YES, IT'S A LITTLE KNOWN FACT - that for a while in the 1880's, the biggest watch retailer in the country was at the train station.

Richard W. Sears

Alvah C. Roebuck

It all started with a telegraph operator: Richard Sears and his partner Alvah Roebuck!

SEARS and ROEBUCK"

Bet You Didn't Know That! OK, Maybe you did; I didn't!

Thanks to Skip, AF6HC

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Vaca Valley Radio Club has proudly served the Northern Solano County Area since 1988. We pride ourselves in providing a friendly place for radio amateurs to meet and improve their operating skills.

We participate in public service events throughout the year and are always ready to assist with communications during times of emergency.

Browsw our website for more information about our club. If you have any questions please e-mail us at w6vvr@w6vvr.net or call 707-448-5665 for assistance

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988. General Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM 330 Nut Tree Road, (Nut Tree Airport)

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at: w6vvr

Club repeater in Vacaville:w6vvr.net 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
The W6VVR net call is Tuesday evenings at 8pm on the club repeater. All are invited to participate in this weekly meeting on the air. 73!

Additional local repeater
WV6F 440.025(+)

The Jimmy Doolittle Center Museum at the Nut Tree Airport

Future Plans for the Museum

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VACAVALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

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License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)

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